

REMARKS

The application has been amended to place the application in condition for allowance at the time of the next Official Action.

Claims 2-26 are pending in the application. Applicants would like to thank the Examiner for indicating allowable subject matter in claims 2-6 and 8-26.

The claims are amended to address the claim objections noted in the Official Action.

Claim 7 is rejected as anticipated by ROBERTSON et al. 6,594,799. This rejection is respectfully traversed.

Claim 7 provides that the designing center and the manufacturing center report work progress status information to the data-managing center, voluntarily or in response to inquiry received from the data-managing center.

The position set forth in the Official Action is that Figures 3-10 and column 9, line 40 through column 10, line 62 of ROBERTSON et al. disclose this feature.

However, applicants have thoroughly reviewed ROBERTSON et al., including the passages noted in the Official Action and are unable to discern such a teaching in ROBERTSON et al.

Applicants note that column 20, lines 49-65 of ROBERTSON et al. disclose that the portal site 204 (data-managing center) preferably provides an interface or an automated mechanism for suppliers to enter and update compatibility

information. Such compatibility information enables end users to evaluate supply channel alternatives to determine the viability and reliability of supply chain choices. The compatibility information of ROBERTSON et al. is prior to any work commencing and is not related to work progress and as such ROBERTSON et al. do not teach that the designing center and manufacturing center report work progress status information to the data-managing center.

Column 25, line 51 through column 27, line 56 of ROBERTSON et al., in discussing the relationship between the end user and the designing center, disclose that the end user goes through a variety of steps in choosing the design expert. The final step of the flow chart in Figure 10 (step 1026) is that the user receives the expert services. There is no teaching or suggestion in ROBERTSON et al. that there is any subsequent step wherein the designing center reports the work progress status information to the data-managing center.

It appears that the portal site 204 (data-managing center) of ROBERTSON et al. is a way to facilitate connections between the end users and suppliers (including designers). There is no teaching or suggestion in ROBERTSON et al. that the suppliers, whether they be the designing center or the manufacturing center, report work progress to the data-managing center.

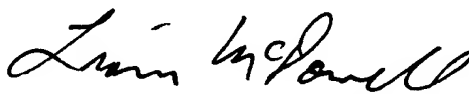
It appears that the portal site of ROBERTSON et al. only tracks the movements of users through the portal site in order to learn about the design preferences and design approaches of users individually and in the aggregate, and the work progress status information of the designing center and the manufacturing centers are not reported to the data-managing center.

As this reference does not disclose that which is recited, the anticipation rejection is not viable. Reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection are respectfully requested.

The Commissioner is hereby authorized in this, concurrent, and future replies, to charge payment or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 25-0120 for any additional fees required under 37 C.F.R. §1.16 or under 37 C.F.R. §1.17.

Respectfully submitted,

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